SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY
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Q: When you first came in as Secretary you didn't really seem to jump at the idea. Can you tell us just a little bit about... You may have a few opening comments to make, but can you also tell us a little bit about what you think about the job, now that you've been in it for a short period of time. And also, how do you find members of Congress from the standpoint of protecting their own projects and so forth as you try to trim down the defense budget?

A: Let me make some comments on those questions, and then if I may, I'd like to take a few minutes to talk about my trip to Korea which I just returned from. I'm going to give what I consider a major talk on Korea tomorrow. I'll outline some of the issues and problems and what we're doing to deal with them.

It's been a damn exciting three months! (Laughter) It seems like there's been a crisis a week ever since I got into the job. I don't consider myself responsible for creating those crises, but they are certainly there. In a way, if I look back to the Cold War era, it's much more difficult to manage national security and defense issues now than during the Cold War. I think because of the diversity and because of the fact that you don't have a single problem dominating your attention. You have to deal with issues in Bosnia and Somalia and Rwanda, and each of them is quite different in nature. Trying to find the underlying, unifying theme by which we can deal with each of these cases.

In terms of Congress, Jack, I've found them to be very constructive and very sharply... The ones I work with in Congress, in particular, the ones on the four key committees -- the two authorizing committees and the two defense appropriations committees, are generally very well-tuned to defense issues, and very serious and very responsible in dealing with those issues.

We don't always agree on how to approach them, by a long shot. I also think that in those areas you find a greater degree of bipartisan [company] willing to work together to solve problems that we find in most other political issues.

I'm working particularly with them right now to try to get two big issues that are going through the Congress this very week. One of them, of course, is trying to get the budget issues resolved; and a particular problem we're dealing with right now is the top line of the defense budget in the face of proposals, and,particularly,the Exon-Grassley Amendment to make a major cut in the overall President's budget,which we anticipate a big chunk which would get allocated to a decrease in the defense top line.

A major concern right now in dealing with the Congress is basically protecting the top line of the budget, and that's going to be probably resolved this week or next week. We have gotten strong support from the four committees that we traditionally work with in trying to help us protect the top line.

A second issue which is going through Congress this week and next week is the acquisition reform legislation. One form or another of that has been approved both in the Senate and the House committees, and those committees will be going to conference soon to deal with that issue. Here, we're getting strong, and, I would say, almost uniform support in the Congress for having acquisition reform legislation. The issue is, and in the details of it, this is the classical case of the devil being in the details. We can get what we will get, I believe, of an acquisition reform bill which will, even in the worst case, will give us the authority to greatly streamline, greatly improve the way we do defense acquisition. But there's a wide range of effectiveness between the weakest form of the bill and the strongest form of the bill that are now being considered. So, I'll work with the committees and I'll work in trying to influence what happens in the conferences on there, pushing towards a stronger end of the legislation so that we have a really effective acquisition reform bill so we can make major changes in reform and not changes at the margin.

Whatever comes out of that acquisition reform bill, there are many things that we can do without changes in legislation -- changing our own procedures and changing our own ways of doing business, and we have those underway in parallel with the changes that could be provided to us by the Congress.

Let me pivot here, Jack, if I may, and talk for a few minutes about the problems in Korea.

First of all, let me focus on what is new in Korea. We have, for decades, been facing the problem of a very large North

Korean army placed right up against the DMZ in a way threatening to South Korea. That's why we have troops stationed in South Korea. That has been a worry and a problem now for a decade. So, the question is, what's new about it?

The first thing that's new about it is that this million man force, which is right up against the border, has moved closer to the border over the last few years. This isn't just the last week or two, it's not an immediate activity that has changed, but over the last few years they have moved closer to the border, so that now about two-thirds of this million man army are within 50 miles of the DMZ, and that's truly a forward deployment which gives us substantial cause for concern. And to remind you, the DMZ, in turn, is within 50 miles of Seoul, depending on where you are in the DMZ.

They have added substantial amounts of artillery and tanks in the last few years. All of this the South Koreans and we find threatening. But what's especially new about it is, in the last few years, they've moved forward on a nuclear weapon program. It's important, there's been a lot of confusion as to what this program is and what it isn't. Let me just sketch that out for you very quickly. This is an issue of major concern that I was in Korea talking with both the Koreans and the Japanese.

We know that they have a major nuclear weapon program underway. They built and are operating, for several years, the 25 megawatt nuclear reactor. They have under construction a 200 megawatt nuclear reactor. They have a large reprocessing plant which takes fuel from the reactor and can convert it into weapon grade plutonium. They have regular chemistry laboratories, and they have high explosive test facilities -- all of these are located in the same facility at Yongbyon. It's that facility which has attracted our attention.

What is causing the concern, at the moment, is that they have shut down that 25 megawatt nuclear reactor, and they're about to take a load of fuel out of it. That is a crisis point, because if that fuel gets put into the reprocessing plant and is reprocessed, it could become weapon grade plutonium, and then it would disappear somewhere, we would not know where, into an unidentified facility which would be making nuclear bombs from it.

The fuel that is presently in that nuclear reactor is sufficient to make enough plutonium that could produce about four or five nuclear weapons.

The particular issue, at the moment, is whether the International Atomic Energy Agency will be allowed to be present at this reactor and conduct the kind of inspections they want to

conduct to verify that the fuel is not being diverted to a weapon program. Over the next few months, that either will happen or it won't happen. If it does happen, the fuel will be under IAEA safeguards. If it doesn't happen, then there will be enough plutonium for four or five weapons somewhere out [in the system] in North Korea, and, presumably, being converted into bombs. So, over the next few months it's very important that go one way instead of another.

One of the particular issues which has been with us for some time now in Korea is the question of whether they already have a nuclear bomb. The reason that's a question is because the last time they took spent fuel out of that reactor a couple of years ago, it was done without any supervision or inspection at all, and we don't know what happened to it. But we do know that in the worst case there was enough fuel available at that time that they could have reprocessed it into plutonium. It would have been sufficient to make one or two nuclear bombs. On that basis, Jim Woolsey, the Director of Central Intelligence, has estimated that they may have one or two nuclear bombs already. It is an estimate. When it separates out from what I've described to you with certainty -- we know the facility they have, we know the status of the facility today. What we don't know is what they did with that plutonium they took out a few years ago. We estimate that they may very well have made one or two nuclear bombs from that already.

Once that fuel gets reprocessed and sent to wherever they send it, we lose track. We have no way of determining what happens to it after that. But the estimate was that the reason they processed that plutonium was that they wanted to make a nuclear bomb out of it, and we believe that if they have the capability to convert that into a bomb, they would choose to do that.

So, that's the issue we have pending with North Korea at the moment, and that faces us really with three alternative courses of action. We could, on the one hand, ignore what's going on there and hope that it will work out over the long term. Some people in South Korea have strongly argued for that position. Their rationale is that the North Korean government is economically failing, and that the regime will collapse in time, one to two years in the future, possibly associated with the ultimate demise of Kim Il Sung. So, their rationale is let's wait and not do anything rash. Time is on our side, they say.

The problem with that argument is that if there is going to be a crisis in North Korea, we would rather it happen before they get a large number of nuclear bombs. As time is passing on, they're moving downstream to a program which will get them, eventually, the capability to make about a dozen bombs a year.

The facilities we see there, and imagine them in full production, they can make about a dozen nuclear bombs a year at that facility.

A second alternative would be to apply various forms of military pressure on the North Koreans. The most obvious one, which has been proposed by some people, is using conventional weapons to take out their nuclear reactor, to destroy it. We don't rule out for all time that alternative. We are not pursuing that alternative now. The rationale is that because that clearly has the risk associated with it of provoking a large scale war, that that should be the last alternative considered and not the first. That takes us to what it is we are pursuing now, which is two related activities. One is diplomatic, to try to push the North Koreans to give up this program. The second is military preparedness.

Now, pushing is in process as we speak, and it's working unilaterally with the North Koreans, it's working bilaterally with the South Korean Government and trilaterally with the Japanese, and it's working through the UN -- particularly the International Atomic Energy Agency. We will know within a week or so whether the first phase of that has been successful. We've been getting the IAEA inspections into Yongbyon for this refueling that will be taking place.

The main thrust of the proposal that we have made jointly with the South Koreans to the North Korean government is what our diplomats call a broad and thorough approach. To put it in simple terms, what that means is that if the North Koreans will give up their nuclear bomb program, we in South Korea will work with them to help them in the economic development of their country various ways.

There is both pressure being put on the North Korean government and incentives to give up this program. But as I sit here, I cannot tell you whether those will be successful. If it's not successful, then the next diplomatic step would be to go for sanctions which we would initially go to the United Nations and request sanctions, and if those are granted, those would probably be applied in successive stages. If the United Nations did not approve the sanctions, if there were to be vetoes, for example, by one of the members, then we would still proceed on a multinational consortium of sanctions which would not be as effective as international and UN sanctions, but would still have some substantial effect on North Korea.

That's a quick summary of where we are in North Korea today. We have rejected doing nothing. We have rejected for the time, at least, putting military pressure on them. We're pursuing diplomatic options. We are prepared to go to sanctions, if

necessary. We understand that sanctions are considered very provocative by the North Koreans, and therefore, we have been increasing our military readiness and preparedness in South Korea right along. And in the paper which I'll present tomorrow, I lay out, in some detail, what we have done in a military way to prepare not for an attack on North Korea, but to prepare ourselves if they were to be provoked by sanctions or by other actions we're taking, and take the rash action of initiating a war against South Korea.

Q: You're not dealing with a rational leadership in North Korea.

A: It's certainly a leadership whose calculus we don't understand fully. From their sense it might be quite rational. There's a certain consistency of action on the part of the North Koreans. I don't believe I would call it irrational, but I will say we don't understand what drives Kim Il Sung. Secondly, there is a certain instability in that it is clear that the decisions are made by one or two or a very small ruling clique in North Korea, and it's a clique which isolates itself from inputs from the rest of the world.

I think the most dangerous thing about that situation is the isolation of the government, which puts leadership in the position they can believe what they want to believe, or what their lackeys around them tell them they can believe. Those are very worrisome. That's the most worrisome thing. Rather than it would be irrational in the political sense of that word.

Q: There have been a lot of different statements made by U.S. officials about Korea over the past year. One of the things that, until recently was a constant, was the formulation that the United States and China have similar interests or objectives in a non-nuclear Korea. In the last month, that seems to have changed. The President (inaudible) after he visited China. How are you going to get China to go along with the sanctions, and can you do it without China?

A: China will, in the last analysis, do what it thinks is in its national interests. What I believe will remain constant in China's view on this problem is they do not want a war on the Korean Peninsula. They do very substantial business trade with South Korea, and economics is driving China today more than any other issues, I believe. Secondly, they have stated many times, and I believe them, that they do not want North Korea to have a nuclear weapon program.

When people are optimistic about China, they're reflecting on those two facts, what we believe to be facts.

When they're pessimistic is when they're trying to get down to the tactics of what actions China would take to manifest those views. In China, every time we or South Korea or Japanese leaders talk with China, they've been very clear that they did not want to put pressure on North Korea, and they want to be patient and give them time. So the difference, and it can be a very important difference, is the tactics of how to deal with a problem, even though we both agree on what the end results ought to be. To get down to the specifics (inaudible), they have shown very little, given very little encouragement that they would support a sanction vote in the UN if it came to that. Whether they would abstain or whether they would veto it, I can't forecast at this time. It would depend, to a certain extent, I think, on how we get to that point. That is whether we have succeeded in a step-by-step and a patient way to get to the point of going to sanctions.

Had we gone in two months ago and asked for sanctions, I think it was predictable what the answer would be. They probably would have vetoed it. But if we proceed patiently and if they see North Korea's behavior has been clearly obstructive, that they're not trying to be cooperative, it's quite possible, I believe, that they would, if not support the sanctions, at least not veto them.

In terms of whether they can be effective, sanctions to be fully effective would require the cooperation of China because China has been and continues to be the largest supplier of goods from the outside, in particular, the single, the item that would be most effective for sanction on North Korea would be energy, and that comes from and would continue to come from China if they did not support sanctions.

There are many other ways that North Korea can be affected by sanctions, which can be applied bilaterally, trilaterally, stopping arms trade, stopping the flow of hard currency into Korea through Japan. China's cooperation in the sanctions would be necessary to be fully effective. Even without China's cooperation, sanctions could be constructive, which could be very damaging to North Korea. Particularly damaging to the flow of hard currency to get into the country.

Q: Can I ask you about Bosnia. Over the weekend, as you know, we had another incident. I wondered if you could put that into perspective, what implications that has, where we go next, and (inaudible) in terms of getting the Serbs (inaudible).

A: Which specific incident are you referring to? The one with the tank, the tank engagement?

Q: Yes.

A: I think the specific questions we're facing here fall into two categories. The first is whether we can -- we being the UN in this case, with the support of NATO -- can maintain the safe haven areas already declared. We have now through the NAC, through NATO's Advisory Council, we have sufficient authorization to conduct what could be very extensive and intensive air strikes to support the safe haven areas. We lacked, as you know, that authority up until a few weeks ago. I'll come back to that in a minute.

The second category is whether we would seek to extend the authority to provide NATO military support in areas other than those safe haven areas. The incident at Tuzla over the weekend and some of the reports that the Serbs may be planning some new offensive in the Brcko area both raise the question as to whether there would need to be an extension of the authority for NATO to provide military support to the UN forces.

On that first category, it's hard to predict what is in the Serbs' minds, the Serbs' military planners' minds right now, but I think they may understand the difference between the authority that NATO was given a few weeks ago and the authority we had prior to that point. Prior to that point, we could bring in air strikes only as UN requested close air support. That was a very limited sort of an event and it brought very limited strikes. Those strikes were relatively ineffective, in really influencing the Serbs' behavior, I think. With the new NATO authority that came in a few weeks ago, we were prepared to launch major air strikes at Gorazde, and would have launched major air strikes if that shelling had continued. I think that was understood by the Serbs, and I think that was instrumental in their decision to back off from Gorazde, to stop the shelling of that city.

It would seem to me then that what we're going to see at the safe haven areas will not be a major confrontation challenging NATO to produce these major air strikes, but testing the limits. Probing and pushing. I think that's probably what's going on in on the outskirts of Gorazde right now.

My estimate is that's not going to be where the main new developments are. The main developments are they're going to move their heavy weapons to another area and begin another offensive, and that might be around Tuzla or it might be around Brcko I don't know.

That will raise the question then, as to whether we want, whether the UN, first of all, wants to get involved in a major way to stop the combatant activity; and if so, whether NATO will get involved in it. The only way NATO can be involved right now in the Brcko area is if the UN is there in some force and calls

for close air support, which is, again, rather limited in its scope.

If there is major new military activity that gets underway in some other part of Bosnia that's not a safe haven area, then we will be faced with a decision as to whether to extend the protection of NATO air power to that area. That's a decision still ahead of us, based on developments on the ground in the next weeks and months.

That's about all I'd comment on Bosnia.

Q: (Inaudible) playing that game for...

A: The main thrust of both the UN and NATO strategy is to move toward a cessation of hostilities and a peace agreement. We don't envision that this NATO use of air power by itself decisively affects the outcome of the war. It's intended to limit civilian casualties while we're getting to that point. Also, we hope it provides some incentive to the two different sides to get to a peace agreement. The big issue has always been whether the use of military power was an equal incentive on both sides to get to the negotiation table. That has always been a concern.

Q: But if they do undertake another offensive (inaudible), I would imagine your inclination would be to seek additional authority for new air strikes, wouldn't it?

A: I think that would depend on the circumstances in which... Certainly, if UN forces are threatened, or if civilian populations are threatened with heavy casualties, those would be the conditions which led us to seek (inaudible) in Gorazde. I wouldn't want to extrapolate what the UN and NATO might do if we went into circumstances different from the ones in which they decided [in the past].

Q: Back to Korea. You mentioned there was some feeling in Korea that you should just wait and do nothing. Is that a very strong opinion?

A: One of the major conclusions I came to from my visit to Korea and to Japan, I might say, was that that feeling is not nearly... That feeling, I thought, was reasonably strong a few months ago. I did not detect much of that in my last visit. I think the difference came not from anything we said or the South Korean government said, but it came from the North Korean government's inflammatory and very-ill-advised rhetoric about turning Seoul into a "sea of flames." If that remark was intended to intimidate the South Koreans, it had exactly the opposite effect. It angered them.

The South Korean government took the unusual step of taking the tape of that meeting at which that was said, and playing it over the radio over and over again, so that everybody in South Korea now has heard that statement and has heard North Korean officials saying that. That has really angered them, and I think has strengthened their resolve quite a bit. The issues which were very much up in the air a few months ago, would the South Korean government support our sending reinforcements over -- the Patriots, for example; would they agree to setting a new date for conduction of Team Spirit; would they support sanctions if the IAEA talks broke down. They have very strong, very firm positions on all three of those. The Patriots, of course, have already been decided. They were already sent over. They're now deployed and operational. So there have been major changes that have taken place in the resolve of the South Korean government, and I think it reflects, I would estimate that it reflects a stronger resolve and sensitivity to the problem in the South Korean population.

We have, I think, complete solidarity at this point between the South Korean government and the American government assessment of the problem, and assessment of what we have to do about the problem.

Q: There's been a fairly consistent disagreement over the past year (inaudible) between the State Department with their view that North Korea wants to deal and will give up its military weapons and (inaudible). And the CIA with (inaudible). They have no intention of bargaining them away or giving them away. What's your view, what's the Pentagon's view?

A: I haven't met anybody yet who truly knows what's in Kim Il Sung's mind. But it's clear, I think, from his behavior, that he values this nuclear weapons program highly, and that he's not going to give it up easily. Whether that means he will hang on to it against all pressure and against all brandishments or whether we can find the right combination of pressures and incentives will be determined, I think, in the next few months.

We are proceeding as if a combination of pressure and incentives will cause him to give it up. At the same time, we're increasing our military readiness in the area so that if we're not successful, we have a substantially heightened sense of readiness. Also, because we realize that some of the pressures we're putting on may be provocative to the North Koreans. What is provocative to them and what is not provocative to them is difficult for us to assess fully. But they have stated, unambiguously, that imposing sanctions would be equivalent to a declaration of war. That is, they say they would be very, very provocative. We don't know whether that's excessive rhetoric, but we cannot afford to act as if their statements are made

lightly. We have to take their statements, in the first instance, we have to take the statements at face value.

So, if we are moving into requesting sanctions, I would feel it would be important to increase our readiness as if they were serious about that.

Q: Mr. Secretary, you mentioned three years ago the North Koreans were shrewd enough to make one or two nuclear weapons. And yet I can't recall that it ever became an issue or that it ever was discussed publicly. What happened at that time in terms of the United States' reaction?

A: I'm not quite sure I understand the question. What did our government do at that time?

Q: As far as I know, it never became a public issue. You said, as I recall your words, that three years ago they had enough spent fuels in their nuclear reactor in North Korea to make one or two nuclear weapons. Basically, the outside world didn't know what happened. I wondered why, if it's a critical moment now and they have enough spent fuel to make three or four, why it wasn't just as critical when they had enough spent fuel to make one or two nuclear bombs.

A: It's because we didn't learn about that with any real confidence until the IAEA inspections earlier this year. In the course of those inspections, they uncovered some data...

Q: You mean we were so lacking in intelligence we didn't know that they had a nuclear reactor with spent fuel?

A: What our intelligence tells us is the size and the extent of the facilities, and a very, very limited amount of information about what's going on inside those facilities. On that basis, some people have estimated that they might already have gotten some fuel and reprocessed that, and may be on their way to making a bomb. Those estimates existed before the IAEA inspection. What gave considerable impetus to those estimates was the measurement that said, indeed, a few years ago they did pull some fuel out, it was probably about this amount, and who knows what happened to it, but they've got a reprocessing plant right next door, so it's quite capable of turning it into plutonium.

Where it goes from that reprocessing plant is, again, a matter of estimate. It does not take a large, specially configured facility to go the next step, to perform the physics task of converting the plutonium into a bomb.

Q: What's your assessment of the state of American public opinion or congressional opinion on this? You're giving a major speech tomorrow. Is this because you have a sense that we are moving toward sanctions and to military moves that would alarm the public and the Congress if you don't prepare the way?

A: First of all, let me make a general statement.

I talked about the crises that have been feeding the headlines for the last couple of months. They're about issues which are important -- Somalia, Rwanda, Bosnia -- but they don't affect the vital national interests of the United States the same way that the Soviet Union used to, the same way that, even today, Russia would affect it if Russia were to veer off into a totalitarian militaristic anti-Western government again.

They don't affect it the same way it would be affected if North Korea were to get a major new nuclear weapon capability and then engage in a war with South Korea.

So, the two really big national security problems we face today are with Russia and with Korea. And to the extent those are being managed properly, and to the extent we have God on our side on those, they will not be the crisis of the week. That is, they will not be a headline issue. If they're managed properly, they're not becoming an issue of military crisis. So, our job there is to keep these from becoming a crisis.

One of the negative consequences of that is that the public and the Congress are not quite as aware of what these problems are because they're not on the front page. And yet, if they become a crisis, then we go almost overnight from an issue which the public hasn't been following to an issue affecting, in a major way, our national security. For that reason, I felt it important to try to describe as clearly and as accurately as I can to the public and to the Congress what the national security issues are in Korea and in Russia. So, the two major talks that I've given since I've been in office have been on those two subjects.

A major concern is trying to prevent these from becoming a crisis. Things that we can do in a diplomatic and in a military preparedness point of view, both have those objectives. But the military preparedness has another objective as well, which is if we fail in diplomatic, and indeed it becomes a military confrontation, we're ready for it. That's almost the definition of what readiness is all about. Readiness serves both as a deterrent to military action, and it prepares you for it. So, I think it is important from both of those points of view.

I think, therefore, that the public and the Congress ought to understand why we're taking the actions we're taking. Not only to support the things we need to do to deter this from becoming a crisis, but to prepare ourselves that notwithstanding our best efforts, it might become a crisis. We might actually have to go to sanctions, and sanctions do increase the risk of a military confrontation.

Q: How much do you blame the Administration for failing to make these kind of priorities clear? You look back over the last year, President Clinton's statements on Bosnia have gone back and forth. I think the public's general impression is that he's cried wolf a lot about Bosnia. Now the only warnings that are coming out of the White House about some of these smaller conflicts... Do you see a need by the Administration to be clear in what your foreign policy priorities are?

A: I would have to agree that we need for this Administration or any Administration to be as clear as we can about foreign policy objectives. I'm part of the Administration, and these two talks I've given on Russia and Korea are precisely for that purpose, to try to be clear on what I think are the two major national security issues of the day.

In addition to doing that, we have to deal with the crisis of the week and the crisis of the month. They won't go away.

Q: Why can't you? Are you being pressured to do that by the media? Why do you have to get into every quagmire around the world?

A: Let me take Bosnia as an instance. We have been clear and consistent on several major points about Bosnia. Depending on what the headline of the week is, people may or may not agree with that position, but it's been fairly clear and fairly consistent. We have stated from the beginning that our national security interests in Bosnia do not warrant becoming a combatant in the war, and we have not. There has been a lot of pressure from people -- sometimes highlighted in the media, depending on what's happening that week -- that what is happening in Bosnia is terrible. These are particular articles which compare the Serbs' actions in Bosnia with the holocaust, and all of those say we should, we have a responsibility to do something about it. Our military judgment is to do something about it, that is getting in and winning a war -- getting into the war and winning it and defeating the Serbs requires the commitment of major ground combatant forces, and we have said consistently we're not going to do that.

Therefore, all of the criticism which says we should do more on Bosnia in terms of beating the Serbs, winning the war with the

Serbs, carried to this conclusion, means that we should be committing major ground combatant forces to enter the war to defeat the Serbs. And from the beginning, we have consistently said we're not going to do that. Some people don't like that answer, and complain for that reason. Some people may accept the answer but they don't like the consequences of the answer, which is that the Serbs, at one time or another, may be winning the civil war that they're engaged in.

Another position we've taken, and I want to separate that from becoming a ground combatant is that we're not participating in peacekeeping operations as ground forces. I want to separate out those issues, they're very different issues.

The UN is there not to fight the war. The UN is there in a peacekeeping operation. We're supporting that peacekeeping operation, but we're supporting it three ways. Humanitarian assistance, and a very substantial humanitarian assistance; through limited air power support of UN forces; and through the rather small detachment we have in Macedonia which is there to help keep the war from spreading on the southern front. But we are not putting ground troops in with the UN peacekeeping forces, and we have been criticized for that.

But again, the President from the beginning has been consistent in saying we're not going to do that.

So, I believe that the position on Bosnia has been consistent, it has led to results which sometimes are not very attractive. Some people don't like the results coming out of Bosnia. In particular, they don't like the feeling of a lack of power because since we're not on the ground in Bosnia we cannot make unilateral decisions about what should be done there. We can't unilaterally go in and bomb an area when there are some allied forces in on the ground who could be effective.

Q: With regard to (inaudible) which he later amended to (inaudible) penetrations of U.S. intelligence from other agencies besides the CIA, are you concerned that someone from this department in intelligence operations, and specifically in NSA, the DIA, the Naval Investigative Service, has been penetrated?

A: We can never be complacent about the possibility of some sort of penetration. We have major counter-intelligence operations going on all the time to try to uncover such entities. We don't have information which points to a specific reason to be concerned on that, but there's a general reason to be concerned about it all the time, and we are concerned about it from that point of view. So, I can't give you chapter and verse of what Mr. Ames said that pointed to a particular problem in the Defense Department. We are looking, of course, very carefully at that.

One of the major sources of, he would be, quite obviously, a potential source for disclosing such a problem if it existed, and as you know, that's what they're pursuing with him right now. So, we will be watching that with very, very great interest.

Q: I was trying to figure out what (inaudible) had in mind. If it isn't the CIA and it isn't the Pentagon, any of the Pentagon's intelligence operations, I'm just wondering who's left?

A: I can't comment on what he had in mind with that statement.

Q: (Inaudible) Korean nuclear weapons, I had a question about our own. I think the Congress has asked the Rand Corporation to look at why we need the Defense Nuclear Agency. In connection with that, they're probably going to look at the larger issue of why 30,000 Americans go to work every day (inaudible).

I was wondering if you could explain whether we do need, in your opinion, the Defense Nuclear Agency, and whether there's been a (inaudible) of why we continue to have such a large infrastructure for nuclear weapons when clearly, we're not building them any more.

A: That's a very complex question. I'll just make a few general comments on it. The first is that we don't need in the future as big a nuclear infrastructure as we've had in the past. Quite clearly. So, there will be some reductions in that infrastructure.

Secondly, that falls precisely under my definition of a unique infrastructure which we need to preserve at some level if we ever need to reconstitute a capability of this sort. Therefore, whatever level we take it down to, we want it to have some, there would be some [minimum essential] development and production capability from which we could build if we ever had to in the future.

The third comment then, is a way to achieve that in the face of the dramatically reduced need and demands of nuclear weapons, R&D and production, is to introduce as much diversification into that program as we can. And both DNA, the Defense Department, and the various DOE laboratories in the infrastructure, all have, as you know, very extensive programs in defense conversion and defense diversification.

So, three things are going to be happening simultaneously. The first is that the amount of money we spend on nuclear weapons, research and production is going to decrease.

Secondly, the size of the laboratories and the size of the DNA is going to decrease.

Third, some of the activity within the laboratories and DNA are going to be converted over into non-weapon, non-defense activities. The reasons for doing that are not only because we want to sustain some (inaudible) capability, but because the technical capabilities at those DOE facilities are some of the best in the world, and for that reason there's an interest in trying to maintain some of that capability in place.

But having said all that, there's going to be a substantial reduction in size and scope of those activities.

Q: ...DNA, Congress would like to just zero it out.

A: I find DNA very useful for things... We've used them for years for things that have little to do with weapon research and development. For example, DNA has been the administrative and contracting agency which has done all of our defense conversion contracting under the Nunn/Lugar program. That has some indirect connection with nuclear weapons or weapons of mass destruction, but (inaudible) excellent capability we have in place to solve the new problems we're dealing with [at the moment].

Q: Can we go back to the broad question of coordinating foreign policy? One of the complaints that even great friends of this Administration have had is not the policies are wrong, but they're not coordinated or managed very well. Last year Secretary Christopher even publicly said that it would be helpful if the President spent more time in non-crisis (inaudible).

About a month ago there was the (inaudible) Bosnia policy that then set off a kind of a scramble to (inaudible) clarify what they thought Bosnian policy was. I ask this question not about Bosnia policy, but over why that [unseemly] scramble was necessary, and whether whatever was broke... Can you tell us what was broken and whether it's been fixed?

A: Let me take the general question and separate out the Bosnia from it as a special and, I think, an atypical case. On the question of the President's oversight of foreign policy, if I look at the last two weeks, I have met with the President almost every day on foreign policy, national security issues. Certainly five or six times a week -- sometimes including Sundays, and some of them being very lengthy meetings, three and four hour meetings dealing with major issues of national security and foreign policy. So I have observed that he's very much hands-on on these

issues, very knowledgeable of the issues involved, and very much playing a leading role.

I say this to address one of the criticisms, which is that foreign policy needs the leadership of the chief executive, the President, and that that's where the integration of foreign policy is really done, rather than in any one of these departments of government.

So I have personally felt a very close contact and a very intensive oversight from the President. I cannot comment whether [it's always] been that way, but certainly since the time that I've been the Secretary, in particular including the last three weeks of fairly intensive crises, he has been very much hands-on.

Bosnia, what you called a scramble clarifying the Bosnia policy following my appearance on "Meet the Press", I think that was atypical. On the issue that was (inaudible) here, which is what we should be doing relative to providing NATO air support to UN operations in Bosnia, we were all together. That is I, Christopher, Lake, and the President all had an identical view of what to do on the issue. So that was not a matter of not agreeing on what to do and not understanding what we're doing, it's an issue of where I gave the media an opportunity for a ten second sound bite, and it was played up as a ten second sound bite and misinterpreted. I didn't catch on quickly enough what the misinterpretation was, or I could have corrected the record the very next day. So that was an error on my part on, first of all, allowing that opportunity; and for, second, not correcting it soon enough after it was made.

The specific issue which is whether we could or should use air power to support UN operations in Bosnia, I consistently believed -- believed when I said that, believed before, I still believe -- that we should have a robust use of NATO air power to support UN operations. If you read the full transcript of that interview, you'll see that that statement was specifically made.

The question I was trying to answer when (inaudible) was asking me what would we do to stop the fall of Gorazde, was we would not enter as a combatant. That was our policy then; it's still our policy. We will not enter as a combatant. But I was prepared to use, NATO was prepared to use air power in whatever means appropriate to support the UN forces there. So that was one element of the confusion, was the confusion between not entering as a combatant and not using the NATO air power in the role we could use them in.

The other point was that -- which really complicated the issue -- was that the authorities (inaudible) air power. That context was limited to close air support. I said not only in

that interview but in other interviews, that's very limited in what that can do. Indeed, the two applications we made of it, we provided it to be very limited in what it could do. But that's not to say that air power itself is limited in what it can do. And once it became clear that the Serbs would move their artillery from Sarajevo to Gorazde and were now starting to shell Gorazde, we sought and got an approval for much more robust use of air power. I fully supported that. I actually formulated the Sarajevo model in the first place, and would have applied it to Gorazde then if the circumstances at Gorazde had warranted it. They did not at the time. They did at the time we applied them.

So that was what could be most charitably described as a communication misunderstanding, and I have to take a certain part of the responsibility first of all, for not understanding that that statement standing by itself could be misinterpreted, and not catching it quickly enough.

Q: (Inaudible) about how to avoid that?

A: The lessons I've drawn from that is when I make a direct flat statement of that sort, to put the qualifiers in the same statement, not in the next paragraph. (Laughter)

Q: In dealing with potential crises through diplomacy and military preparedness, how much is our believability, our credibility damaged by the turn-around of the ship facing (inaudible) Haiti, and the withdrawal of American troops in Somalia after the deaths of 18 Rangers?

A: I'm not quite sure of the question. Try me again.

Q: If you're trying to deal with a crisis through military preparedness and diplomacy, there has to be a certain credibility to your military preparedness. I wonder how much was that credibility hurt by the fact that we turned the ship around in Haiti when faced with thugs on the docks, and what we went through in Somalia after the 18 Rangers were killed.

A: I think the test of actions of that sort ought to be whether we did what we said we were going to do. That doesn't mean that's what the test will be. The test will sometimes based on perceptions rather than reality. In the Harlen County episode, we did what we said we were going to do. At no time was that operation intended to be a forceful landing of troops. Those troops were not even armed for combat. The troops were being taken there in the Harlen County presumably at the invitation of the Haitian army, were trainers. They were going to help train the Haitian army. They were armed only with sidearms. It would have been irresponsible to have landed those troops in what the military calls a non-permissive environment.

Now we had an option of having the ship wait outside the harbor and send in some armed troops to make a forceful landing. Those would not have been the troops to have done that. We could have brought a battalion of Marines, a brigade from the 82nd Airborne if we wanted to make a forceful entry into Haiti. But we were not asked to make, we were not authorized to make a forceful entry. We had been invited to facilitate a peace agreement called the Governor's Island Accord by providing a small detachment of army people to train the Haitian army. So that mission, obviously, wasn't available at the time because it did not have the environment which we could land the troops reasonably. So we could have either, ourselves, unilaterally come up with a new mission, the mission being to storm the beaches and to make a forceful entry, which we chose not to do, or pull them out and go back to see if we could reconstruct the Governor's Island Accord. We chose to do that. That reconstruction of the Governor's Island Accord has, over the months, met no success. So now we're reconsidering what we should do at this point.

Q: Is there a military solution?

A: A military solution in Haiti is certainly not an attractive option, which is one reason we have been very reluctant to consider it. Could we forcibly enter the island and suppress the Haitian army? Yes. There's no question about that. After we've done that, what does that do? Could we maintain, could we accomplish what we were trying to do with a peace agreement in the first place, which is achieve the two objectives that we have in Haiti which is to stabilize the situation there and to reinstall democratic government? Our policy all along has been that that's what we're trying to achieve, and we've been trying to achieve it through diplomacy, not through a forceful military entry. We will continue using diplomacy as long as there's any hope for that.

Q: Rwanda seems to be at the outer edge of (inaudible). (Inaudible) any level of bloodshed or number of deaths there before sending half a million or a million people -- a lot more than in Somalia, are there any circumstances under which there would be American military (inaudible)?

A: It's clear that Rwanda is a worldscale humanitarian tragedy. You see different figures, but even the lower end of the range suggests that there are tens of thousands, maybe even hundreds of thousands of people, casualties or refugees. I believe that to be a top priority issue for the United Nations not only to provide humanitarian assistance, but to try to intervene to reduce the bloodshed that's going on there. We play an important role in that because we're a big factor in the UN. We're on the Security Council, of course, and we put up something

like 31 percent of the funds that support the UN. It's not clear to me that if the UN were to decide to put in substantial peacekeeping forces into Rwanda to try to mitigate the carnage there, that there are thousands of ground forces we could draw on from that continent. It's not clear to me that the United States has a uniquely important role to play in that regard. I think that's an appropriate run for UN forces. U.S. forces might, however, be called upon to provide some special resources, some areas where we have special capabilities.

We have already had some small involvement in there in terms of providing specialized airlift which we have, which other countries don't have, to help move some of the UN forces in and out of there. I believe we're prepared to provide that kind of specialized assistance. I just don't believe there's any reason why the ground UN peacekeeping forces that would be used there would need to come from the United States.

Press: Thank you very much.

(END)

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Perry Endorses a U.N. Mission to Beleaguered Rwanda

■ **Africa:** The defense secretary promises U.S. support but not troops. The State Department dispatches two envoys.

By STANLEY MEISLER
TIMES STAFF WRITER

WASHINGTON—Defense Secretary William J. Perry on Monday endorsed a proposal for a U.N. military expedition to stop massacres in Rwanda and promised American support—short of combat troops—for such a venture.

Describing the carnage in the tiny Central African country as "a world-scale humanitarian tragedy," Perry told Times reporters at a breakfast meeting here that U.N. Security Council action to reduce the bloodshed there should be "a top priority."

His remarks amounted to the first positive response by the Clinton Administration to a call Friday from Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali for a large U.N. force to quell the frenzied ethnic conflict in Rwanda. Because the United States has veto power, American support, or at least acquiescence, is vital for any new Security Council action.

Yet even as thousands more terrified refugees flowed from Rwanda into a squalid camp in Tanzania, it remained unclear what the Security Council could or would do in the crisis.

The State Department, which dispatched two envoys to the area, focused its energies on trying to arrange a cease-fire rather than galvanizing the Security Council into launching a large peacekeeping operation.

The warfare, which may have killed as many as 200,000 Rwandans, began a month ago after the Hutu presidents of Rwanda and neighboring Burundi died in a mysterious plane crash.

The vast majority of refugees in Tanzania have been members of the Hutu tribe fleeing the Rwandan Patriotic Front, a rebel army dominated by warring Tutsis. The rebels have nearly encircled the capital of Kigali and seized huge slabs of territory, including the border with Tanzania.

White House Press Secretary Dee Dee Myers said that John Shattuck, assistant secretary of state for humanitarian affairs, and David Rawson, the U.S. ambassador to Rwanda, would depart shortly to discuss the crisis with Secretary General Salim Ahmed Salim of the Organization of African Unity and other officials in Uganda, Burundi and Tanzania. Shattuck and Rawson hope to revive peace negotiations between the Rwandan government and the rebels.

One of the most commonly discussed suggestions for a solution to the crisis—an expeditionary force of African troops set up by the United Nations and the OAU—was belittled by Kofi Annan of Ghana, the U.N. undersecretary general in charge of peacekeeping, at an unusual briefing of a Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee on Africa.

"Given the limitations of the OAU, if we want urgent and immediate action, I'm not sure that is the organization to turn to," Annan said Monday. "The only African country that could . . . contain the situation and help bring about law and order probably would be South Africa, but it's too soon to turn to them." The South African government is undergoing reorganization following historic all-race elections.

Further, Annan said, any troops dispatched to Rwanda would have to depend on the American military to get them there. "The United States is one of the few countries . . . able to move . . . assets that can get people into situations like that very quickly," he said.

Perry echoed the sentiment, saying that—although combat duty in Rwanda is more appropriate for U.N. forces than U.S. troops—"U.S. forces might . . . be called upon to provide some special resources, some areas where we have special capabilities"—for example, a "specialized airlift."

Later in the day, U.N. Ambassador Madeleine Albright outlined a different approach. In a Cable News Network forum, she said the United States would ask the United Nations to impose an arms embargo on Rwanda.

She declined to comment on whether the Clinton Administration plans to organize and finance an intervention with African troops.

In a statement released in New York, the Rwandan Patriotic Front said the time is long past for outside intervention. "The genocide is almost completed," the rebel group said. "Most of the potential victims of the regime have either been killed or have since fled."

Before the outbreak of violence, the United Nations had stationed 2,500 troops in Rwanda. The Security Council voted 12 days ago to reduce the number to 270. About 450 U.N. peacekeepers are still in Rwanda. But on Friday, Boutros-Ghali asked the Security Council to expand the force to a size large enough to quell the violence.